

Obviously, this book has appeal for the forensic pathologist and medical examiner; throughout the book there are descriptions explaining the link between autopsy findings with the mode of injury and there is constant reference to the limitations of the post mortem findings. There is a significant overlap between the forensic, coronial and hospital post mortem and this book achieves this although with the obvious slant towards the forensic basis. Important aspects of the forensic examination include the identification of the body and careful documentation of the external examination, both of which are superbly written with excellent illustrations. An area that can be difficult for the forensic practitioner is determining suicide from homicide. The chapter on self inflicted injuries as well as many references in other chapters, highlights this problem and illustrates the classic modes and sites to determine this.

Although in places the book is a little brief in content, the references listed at the end of each chapter provides

the basis for further reading if required. It could also be said that there is too little emphasis on the histological examination at autopsy as sometimes this (possibly more in the hospital setting) can change a cause of death. However, where the microscopy is explored such as in subdural haemorrhages, myocardial infarcts or the histological dating of wounds the author provides a comprehensive analysis.

Overall, the impression is of a good well-structured logical layout interspersed with superb illustrative photographs and diagrams. Knight's Forensic Pathology is an exceptional comprehensive reference text and should be present in every histopathology department.

Katherine Sisson

SpR, Department of Histopathology, Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Cotman Centre, Colney Lane, Norwich NR4 7UB, United Kingdom

doi:10.1016/j.jcfm.2006.03.004

Michael Tskos (Ed.). Forensic pathology reviews, vol. 4, Human Press (2006). 300 pp

I've never written a text book, so I can only guess at the enormity of the internal battles of authorship; the filtering of chaff from wheat; the fight to meet deadlines, and the gnawing anxiety and apprehension that eats at the heart of so many who create. No, I spare myself that agony. I buy books and savour the toil of others.

And so the authors start at an advantage with me. Not only do I like books, but I am impressed by book writers. This particular volume, however, gets more than simple respect from me. It has my admiration. It is an excellent volume, and deserves to be on the bookshelf of any serious Forensic Medical Practitioner.

For although it is clearly written with the Pathologist in mind, there is much that will educate and inform the Clinician as well. For example, the chapters on Neogenesis of Alcohol, and Agrochemical Poisoning (both topics with clinical resonances) are rendered part of the modern CFM scene, if by nothing else, by the clear descriptions and account of the issues written here. There is also a very instructive account of asthma deaths, as well as a well informed presentation of the difficulties of assessing and diagnosing elder abuse. Again, these are topics of interest to the Physician. And then there is the more traditional Pathology territory: Deaths from Lightning (and Sharp Force), Apoptosis In Tissue Injury (go and look it up!), and Postmortem Forensic Radiology, to name but a few of the 15 chapters.

The problem oriented approach to the subject matter is an appropriate modern style, and this book adds to the general forensic knowledge base by taking this tack. But for me, where this work really show its metal, is in the bibliography. There are pages where almost every sentence is suffixed. There are over 1300 references for the whole volume (a contemporary standard work of a similar size on my shelves has a tenth of that number). Time prevented me from checking them all for you, dear reader, but the few I did look up were on the button. The authors deserve much credit for emphasising the evidential base of their work. It can only help those that work in the courts, and one can only hope that this approach will become the norm for all works on forensic medicine in the future.

Despite my liking of this volume, I have one criticism. The reader is the loser by the exclusive use of monochrome illustrations. The histology pages particularly would have benefited from the use of colour plates. Publishing thrift perhaps, but misplaced in my view.

In conclusion: whilst not the whole scope of Forensic Pathology, (it is one of a series of four), this book, if a fair reflection of the Editors output, should not only be bought on its own, but serious consideration should be given by the prospective reader to buying it's sister volumes as well.

Peter Green

*Consultant Forensic Physician,
London, UK*

E-mail address: drpetergreen@doctors.org.uk

doi:10.1016/j.jcfm.2006.07.001